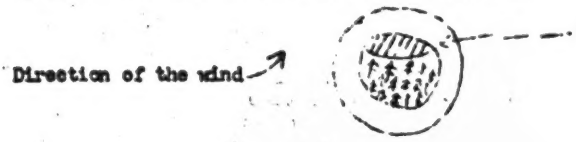
After the war, this cleared land was further settled, with American encouragement, by families returning from abroad. This subdivision of Matsuda, a here-and-there settlement, is called "the clearing" (kaikon). Its houses are few and far apart, and with its isolated farmsteads is in contrast with the thickly settled cluster of a typical agricultural village.

5

Conservation

In Matsuda, the preservation of the forest is constantly encouraged. This awareness, inspired by officials of the Ryukyuan Forestry Agency and its American advisors, reaches down to the school children. Before any burning is done, a permit must be secured. Fire lanes (bōkasen) are cut to prevent the spread of fire. These lanes are circular, and an area on the lee side is burned to prevent spread of the fire in the direction of the wind.



Fire Lane (Bōkasen)

In addition to the fire protection, officials of the Ryukyu Forestry Agency and specialists in the American Civil Administration are trying to discourage overcutting (kanbatsu) which in this area has affected the most numerous species, the pine, the shii, and the Japanese redwood. Since clearcutting (kaibatsu) so easily leads to overcutting, the former practice is also being discouraged. The newer emphasis is on selective cutting (takubatsu).

School children participate in forest conservation. The children attending high school at nearby Ginoza village take part in forest improvement. An active campaign for conservation and forest fire prevention could not begin immediately after the war. In the post-war confusion, it was not until about 1950, with the establishment of the Ryukyuan Forestry Agency, that active supervision on a central government level could be seriously instituted. On an island wide basis, posters and literature pointing to the dangers of forest fires have tried to bring this message to the Okinawans as well as to the Americans. The name of Saion has been used to tie the preservation of the Okinawan forests in with the history and traditions of the people. The famous "Smoky" appears on posters as well.

In the Matsuda area, the recent periods of relaxation or loss of control, according to local residents, were (1) about 1940 when

1: Glacken E-5 (1951-1952) 1953 AC7 Okinawa AC7

6

Conclusion

311
184

In the comparative study of these villages, certain distinctions are worth summarizing. (1) In the southern villages, which lack forest land, there is much more dependence on the uncultivated wild land (genya) which supports the grasses. (2) The forest, in Matsuda as elsewhere in the north, is a reserve for necessities like firewood, thatch, charcoal and building materials, both for local use and southern trade. (3) The shelter belts and groves have been preserved in the north. (4) Tidewater plantings of shelter belts are needed in the south. Plantings of the Ryukyuan Forestry Agency, under American Civil Administration encouragement, have begun in the south as protection from wind and salt water spray damage. These include the mokumao, the pandanus, the hibiscus (Albizzia julibrissum Durass, in Japanese the nemunoki) and the hirugi (Bruguiera spp.)[12] (5) Ecologically, the situation is more balanced in the north where a good start seems to have been made in arresting progressive deforestation. (6) This balance, if Matsuda is a representative village, can only be maintained by constant appraisal of the relationships of the forest to agriculture, to the growing population, and to the economic demands to which this leads, unless the wood and timber demands of the island are to be met in large part by imports.

[245]
[647]

114
648
636

An occupying power like the United States, rich in modern techniques, can do much to improve the life of a small island people. If it is mindful of the history and the present features of the culture, it can suggest improvements without destroying the bases on which the culture rests.

313
114

One of its greatest accomplishments could be an aggressive and continuing program of conservation and afforestation. The present administration, through the Forestry Section of the Food and Natural Resources Department, has started a program which, if permanently pursued, could have far-reaching consequences. An emphasis on selective cutting, conservation, fire control, tidewater plantings, and many other measures could only be a credit to American administrators and foresters as well. The costs, as such things go, would be moderate.

From personal experience in village life, I have no doubt that the co-operation of villagers in all parts of the island could be readily obtained in advancing a large scale afforestation program. The readiness of the people of Matsuda cannot be an exception. These things could be accomplished without an unwieldy administrative apparatus. I have been continually struck with the ability of the Okinawans, with their skill in local organization, to accomplish

12 I am indebted to Mr. Richard Varney of the Department of Food and Natural Resources, USCAR, for this information.

313 which they use interchangeably. After sufficient trees have been cut and [412] cleared of branches, a large bundle of firewood is carried to the village. Most forest workers make four or five trips a day into the hills—two or three during the hot summer season. As the afternoon ends, they sit down along the road in the village or nearby to prepare firewood 474 bundles. Pieces of wood are inserted through a bamboo loop of stand- 313 ard size, prescribed by the cooperative store, until a tight, uniform bundle is obtained. The last piece has to be driven into the bundle by force. All over the village one can hear the knocking of wood pieces [592] which marks the end of a forest worker's daily labor. Each household works independently and sells firewood to the cooperative. A store [436] clerk travels around the village in late afternoon, checks all bundles, and issues credit slips to each household; these can be changed into money at the store. The following morning the truck, owned by the [438] cooperative, carries the firewood to Naha or Itoman where it is sold to a dealer who redistributes it to individual consumers or public bathhouses. The northern part of the island has always supplied firewood to the population of southern Okinawa to be used for kitchen hearths [354] and bath stoves. In recent years kerosene kitchen stoves have become so popular that the depletion of wood resources tends to coincide with decreasing demand.

TRADES AND PROFESSIONS

463 Other ways of making a living exist. A few artisans in Taira derive part of their income from wage labor. A number of Taira men earn their living by carpentering, although they do most of their work in the south. They return occasionally when their services are needed for local house building. When working on local construction, they are [465] paid in money, free lodging, and meals. There are also a few part-time resident carpenters who, whenever they are not employed in house building or repairs, spend their time farming and cutting wood. New [342] buildings are usually put up between the beginning of the second rice crop and the New Year.

463 Several persons are salaried township or village officials. They are paid monthly and work a 44-hour week, not counting many extra meet- 466 ings and duties connected with their work. All office workers however [647] have fields, either their own or those of their parents, where they spend Sundays helping in agricultural pursuits. During rice planting season, they are given special time off to attend to their fields.

Also among the salaried workers are store employees, a full-time

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

director with assistants and clerks. The clerks are always young people just out of school who receive nominal wages in return for a seven-day work week. The township office employs as janitor a girl who keeps the office in order, serves tea at any time during the day, washes dishes, and helps to cook meals for entertaining. Her family owns one of the largest houses in the central village and more land than most others. No social stigma is attached to her job; in fact, most Taira girls would consider it a privilege to exchange their mountain work for her kind of employment even though they would earn no more. Another girl, employed by the local "doctor" as nurse and maid, lives with the family, eats with them, and sleeps with their children. Only one farmer employs a hired hand, a man from another township.

Among others living on a salary is the postmaster. His father held the same office, and his son is now trained to succeed him as the third in line. The rice miller, a man from outside the village and married to a Taira woman, and the "doctor" also depend for most of their incomes on specialized services. The latter owns his dispensary and small hospital. He receives some financial support from the township government. His services to people are compensated for either in cash or kind. Patients who are unable to pay at once will bring rice to his house after the harvest. These remunerations, pig raising, and other side activities make him, along with the rice miller and the postmaster, the wealthiest person in Taira. Local male school teachers also own fields, to which they give time in the afternoons and Sundays to help their wives.

The priestess and her assistants, although they are religious specialists, are not paid in money for their services. They participate in daily work like the rest of the village. Only when performing services outside the community is the priestess paid a small fee. Within the village she receives the food and sake which are offered in the ceremony, whether she is called by a family or prays at the village shrine on a general holiday.

DIVISION OF LABOR BY SEX AND AGE

Men and women are equal partners in everyday economic activities, both in agricultural and forest work. Only a few occupations are clearly differentiated by sex: fishing, the handling of horses, and the carrying of night soil are done exclusively by males; housework and the care and feeding of pigs predominantly by women. Some agricultural work is considered too heavy for women, for example, the turning of the

♣
♣
♣

Chapter 5

Political Organization and Social Control

THE TOWNSHIP

621
631 Administratively Taira village is part of Higashi township, an area of
[131] approximately 30 square miles with six independent villages spread over a distance of about 15 miles along the coast. Taira is centrally located and since 1946 has been the seat of the township administration. Higashi is one of several townships in northern Okinawa. It is responsible to the central Ryukyuan government at Naha which has branch offices at Nago, the nearest town to Taira. Control over communities such as Taira by a central government is of ancient date. The Okinawan king levied taxes throughout the island and held political control over the villages until establishment of Japanese administration.

632 The township office is headed by a mayor who is elected for four years by popular vote. He nominates an assistant mayor who must be confirmed by the township assembly, a council of 16 representatives who are elected from all the villages. The Assembly meets two or three times a year to enact local ordinances, to confirm the mayor's appointments, and to approve the annual budget.

632
647 The administrative organization of the township consists of five departments, which are responsible for carrying out central government policies. The Finance and Education Department is concerned with tax collection and general school affairs. The Industrial Department acts as controlling and advising agent in all matters of subsistence and cash production. Financial help for farmers is channeled through this department. Attached to it is an Agricultural Extension Division agent who is concerned with individual farmers' problems. A General Affairs
[217] Department is in charge of office administration; it is also responsible

21Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

for keeping the population registry, with vital statistics and relevant information on all township residents.* The Welfare Department investigates relief cases and receives applications for support from the poorest families. The Health and Sanitation Administration is primarily concerned with preventive work. Representatives from these five departments are supposed to visit all the villages in the township frequently to inspect and to discuss regulations. The officials and personnel of the five departments are drawn equally from all the villages and commute daily by foot, bicycle, or bus.

The township administration links the central government and individual villages. Numerous requests for central government aid, originating in each community, are sent through the township office. The government in turn deals with each community through the township administration. Contact between township and the villages is maintained by weekly meetings of all village headmen with the mayor and his staff. The village headman is responsible for carrying out township and central government ordinances.

THE VILLAGE

The village headman is elected once a year, in June, from a slate agreed on beforehand during informal discussions by villagers. There is no campaigning; in fact, the elections are treated more as a necessity than a politically important event, and neither before nor after do they incite much public discussion. This democratic process of elections is of post-World War II date. Before the war, the council of village leaders accepted a new headman only if the choice pleased them, so that the headman at that time was virtually appointed. Villagers remarked that "listening to public opinion is a recent change."

The village is still experimenting with the mechanics of a free election. Votes are still restricted to household heads, but the Taira Women's Association and Young People's Association tried to change this in 1955. Although they did not succeed, a concession was made by permitting "representatives" to vote for their household in the absence of a household head, provided the voter was 20 years of age. The elec-

* The old registry was totally destroyed during the war. A new one is being prepared with the help of the people. It no longer differentiates between persons of noble and common descent. Information on crimes committed by people, sentences passed by courts, and other information, such as diseases in the family, like mental illness, is also omitted now.

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
Taira

can at least check all transients. Another important duty is to prevent the use of explosives by fishermen, a difficult if not impossible assignment, for he must catch the fisherman *flagrante delicto* when he lands with fish killed in this way. There is no indication that villagers assist the policeman in detecting offenders.

Policing the village itself is not a difficult job. The absence of crime and the low incidence of quarrels, disputes, and brawls would seem to make policing unnecessary. Nevertheless, the policeman interferes at times in disputes. He considers it his duty when actual blows are exchanged and somebody is hurt. In such a case he "investigates," takes notes, and makes a report to the police department. During the entire field work, reportable incidents occurred at about the rate of one a month; in the two or three cases where violence occurred, the matter was settled peacefully later, although the policeman kept a record of it. The rare quarrels which do occur are usually the result of drinking or domestic disagreements, generated by financial problems.

The policeman plays the role of judge and jury. In one case a young man hit a woman and was temporarily detained by the policeman until he made apologies to the victim. In disputes over business transactions, the policeman often arbitrates. In a dispute in which a Taira woman was accused of cheating a trader from another village, the policeman heard the case and ordered the Taira woman to make refunds over a period of time. The villagers seem to accept such arbitration. Serious disagreements seem to be unthinkable, and everyone fears public censure and ostracism. Court action is extremely rare and is referred to the provincial courts in the town of Nago.

The policeman is given high status by the villagers and commands respect. He remains, probably by his own choice, a neutral person in village affairs. He attends village functions, where he is given a place among village leaders. Being friendly with many families, he visits and is visited by other men. It was noted that fishermen sometimes send a special catch to the policeman. But since this is a courtesy which is also common among farmers with regard to nonfarming people, such as teachers, one should not think of such actions as bribery. Mothers use the policeman as a threat in disciplining children. "If you do such a bad thing again, I'll take you to the police station." This, however, does not seem to instill any fear of his person, but rather a respect towards the general area in which the policeman lives. Village children play freely with the policeman's children, but his courtyard is entered less frequently by children than that of other villagers.

The head of the General Affairs Department at the township office is charged with supervision of public order. It is not clear how much this is a self-assigned task. During several occasions, when an alarm

625 went out for fugitives from the south, he would accompany the police-
[632] man or investigate himself. In cases of death, both he and the police-
[647] man have to make a report.

The Young People's Association may serve as a vigilante in emer-
[575] gencies such as fires, floods, tornadoes, and other disasters. When a
[731] military jeep was reported to have been stolen near Naha and driven on the dead-end road running north, the young people in all villages on the way erected road blocks and were ready to help catch the thief. The group would act together in a similar fashion at any threat from outsiders.

622 The headman can only enforce local ordinances insofar as he is
681 able to persuade people to comply. He is not concerned directly with
[625] crime or disturbance of the peace. Exceptions are such matters as steal-ing sugar cane or letting chickens run loose so that they enter every yard. For such acts, money fines can be imposed. One warden still has a tag which used to be given to the man whose chickens ran around freely. The offender had to pay the fine and keep the tag until he detected someone else's chicken running loose. Then he could pass the
[626] tag on to that person. Such measures are no longer used. But the underlying principle of public censure and fear of ridicule continues to operate in village social control.

623 Public censure is used along with fines to ensure attendance at vil-
626 lage meetings. Roll call is taken before each meeting so that the ab-
[681] sence of individuals is made known to the whole group. Similarly, when tax collections became more and more delinquent, it was decided to have ward meetings in which everybody would be reminded in public to pay his share. Those who were unable to do so would have to state their reasons. As soon as this new plan was announced, several people got up during the meeting to pay outstanding amounts to the head-
872 man. The school uses similar devices to achieve better attendance and scholarship. During home visit week, about once a year, a meeting is held for all parents and the statistics for attendance for each village are read as well as scholastic performances for each community.

INFORMAL CONTROL

156
626 What other people might think is uppermost on everybody's mind.
[867] Children are reminded by their mothers not to play alone lest people would think they are unpopular. They are told not to fight lest others think badly of them or make them responsible for the consequences. Censure by gossip is common, but criticism is seldom made directly to a person's face, and the target of extensive gossip is often unaware of it.

175 area which resulted in a twenty percent reduction in the civilian population
727 and in the destruction of virtually every city, town, and village. The densely-populated southern half of the island, scene of the heaviest fighting, was particularly devastated.

Staggering reconstruction tasks faced the military government at the conclusion of the war, and at first nearly all its efforts were absorbed in managing the problems of food and health for the civilian population. In the course of the campaign nearly all of the people had been removed into civilian internment camps, and many remained there for nearly a year or more before returning to their homes. Most returned to find their homes destroyed and fields overgrown with weeds or littered with the debris of war. In a few areas whole villages were replaced by military installations. The average village found itself without housing, its fields in an unusable condition, and its families decimated. In most cases the district office ('sonyakuba') had been destroyed and with it all family and land records. The physical destruction of the war and the humiliation of defeat left the population apathetic and indifferent for some time. One informant stated this feeling succinctly, "After the war we were left with only the will to live, nothing more." A former war-time and post-war mayor of one village informed the author that nearly six years were required to restore the land to its pre-war state, and he expressed the opinion that this recovery was unduly prolonged by the generous food ration issued by the military government: "No one wanted to work as long as there was free food. Without this food it could have been done in two or three years."

175 On April 14, 1950, the military governor issued Special Proclamation
423 36 which authorized the issuance of new certificates of land title.[1] The
[648] measure necessitated surveying and preparing new land maps and issuing new titles. It was first necessary to set up schools to train personnel for carrying out the assignment. The mapping job was one which the authors heard praised in all farm villages, with a number of informants remarking that Okinawa now had the best land maps of any time in its history. In the confirmation of ownership local bodies were made sovereign, but the individual had the right of appeal to the courts.

423 Copies of the land titles are kept in three offices, the land regis-
647 try and tax collection offices in the district office ('sonyakuba') and in the Central Land Office located in Naha. Under the law all land transactions, rental or sale, must be registered within thirty days; however, even the most casual check of these records plus a knowledge of local holdings indicates that this is not being done, for both the bookkeeping and registration appear to lag far behind transactions. This does not seem to be the result of any deliberate attempt to withhold information but rather appears due to a lack of concern for such details on the part of the individuals concerned. The same sort of situation prevails in the registration of births and deaths. Another factor might well be that the large number of land transactions occurring in the postwar period have left the farmer disinclined

[1] Ryukyu Statistical Bulletin, no. 5, May 1950.

to take registration seriously until conditions are more stable. The Central Land Office in Naha appears to be almost wholly out of touch with local changes; for example, the extensive land changes subsequently described for Kitazato did not appear to be known or recorded on the maps in that office. 423 647

Taxation of farm lands is a very complex matter. Land assessments are made by the district land office in conjunction with village leaders; consequently, there is not only some variation in grading from 'son' to 'son' but also from village to village within the same 'son'. All land is divided into six categories: 1) rice lands or irrigated fields, 2) farm land or dry fields, 3) grass land or meadow (often erroneously translated as wasteland), 4) forest, 5) house or building land, and 6) miscellaneous, including graves, ponds, etc. It will be noted that only the first two categories are food-producing. The first five categories are sub-divided into grades depending on a variety of factors such as fertility, accessibility, availability of water, etc. In Kami Motobu-son there are sixteen grades of land within the five graded categories; thus, there are five grades of rice land, five grades of dry field, two grades of grass land, two grades of forest land, and two grades of house land. The tax is computed by the tax rate per grade of category times the area in 'tsubo' (1224 'tsubo' equal one acre). In Kami Motobu-son grade one dry fields carry an annual tax of 15 'sen' per tsubo; therefore, at current exchange rates (¥120 equal $1.00) a house would pay a tax of $1.53 (¥183.60) for an acre of this grade one land. 651 423

In regard to the matter of property inheritance there is some dissatisfaction with the present laws on the part of educated Okinawans. They feel that the new Japanese constitution adopted during the American Occupation should also be enacted for the Ryukyus. The constitutional reform which took place in Japan after the war did not apply to the Ryukyus; consequently, Okinawa still operates under the old Japanese civil code except for certain gross inequities which have been corrected by military government proclamation. The new Japanese law holds that all children, regardless of sex or birth order, are entitled to an equal share of the parents' estate. In contrast, the old law, which still obtains on Okinawa, grants the bulk of the estate to the first-born son. Under this law property in reality is held for the family by the first son or household head; it is not his to dispose of as he sees fit. Educated Okinawans who discussed this subject with the author expressed the opinion that the old law was undemocratic in giving emphasis to the family over the individual, and they felt that Okinawa should keep pace with Japan in this respect. It should be emphasized, however, that these persons were not farmers; the latter, most of whom are not too well educated, tend to regard the present laws as just, since the emphasis is on preserving the continuity of the family. A further subdivision of the typical Okinawan farm into still more fragmented plots would do little to improve the prosperity of the rural areas. 428 829 [642] [423] 428 829 184

CHAPTER X: EDUCATION

W. P. Suttles

121 None of the SIRI team worked on education as such. We have no basis 891 for a discussion of the physical condition of the schools, number of teachers per pupil, texts, etc., other than the data readily available in USCAR publications. However, it may be useful to include in this report a brief chapter on attitudes toward education, the role of the teacher, and evidence of the results of education, as we have seen them in the course of our research. As I shall try to point out, there are indications that education on Okinawa may not be doing all that it professes to do. Yet it is a remarkable and praiseworthy fact that education has progressed as well as it has, considering the truly terrible destruction of the war and the long and trying process of rebuilding the material facilities and the morale of teachers and students.

1. Respect for Education

871 554 505 [647] Respect for education and the educated is deeply rooted in Okinawan culture. For several centuries administrative posts in the Ryukyuan kingdom were filled by officials drawn from the gentry class and appointed, it is said, on the basis of an examination. The gentry class held a virtual monopoly of education, which was thus one of the bases of their superior status. It is not surprising that the gentry class of the past is identified with learning. An illiterate old man of gentry descent once explained to me that the gentry were originally teachers appointed to various villages, thus misinterpreting the former bureaucracy as a school system.

871 554 791 Another profession open to the educated man in the past, and in the present, is that of the diviner. One of the native terms for this person is suumuchi, the "person with books", his books being the ones with which he reads a person's fate. This is a profession that commands respect. It is quite likely that at one time the diviner was the only person who possessed books with whom the ordinary peasant ever had contact. Books were thus associated with status and with nearly supernatural power.

554 891 Education is still regarded as a means of rising in status. As indicated in Chapter V, the potential scholar is given special treatment by his family because all may participate in the rise in status that his education may bring. But times have changed. In the days of the Ryukyuan kingdom the rewards for education may have come automatically, but under the Japanese administration this was less true, and perhaps least of all today. Education is indeed still valued for its own sake, but it is expected to bring material rewards; if it does not, its authenticity may be questioned.

554 Still, the prestige of learning probably accounts for a type of pseudo-scholar who may be found both in the rural and in the urban scene. In several villages we encountered such individuals, elderly men who were regarded as local sages, who discoursed learnedly and uncritically on local traditions, who revealed information derived from one or two carefully guarded books